

Meeting Minutes (Zoom meeting)
Marion Pathway Committee
Dec. 21, 2020

Attendees: John Rockwell, Paula Meere, John Menzel, Steve Lohrenz, Lorraine Heffernan, Marilou Newell (Wanderer), Bonne De Souza, Elise Frangos, Sharon Giblin

John Rockwell called the meeting to order at 6pm.

1. 75% Design Plan Update for Marion SUP

John Rockwell reported:

The 75% design plan update was submitted last Friday to the DOT, which has 90 days to review and send comments back to us. We can request them to complete the review earlier. After the review comes the MEPA process, which takes 90 days as well. Steve Lohrenz reported that the majority of design work is done.

2. John Rockwell opened the floor for questions and comments.

John Menzel asked about the turtles. John Rockwell assured the group that the turtles are ok and all approvals are complete.

John Menzel requested an update on abutters to which John Rockwell answered that easements are needed for John Henry, Brewfish, and Baldwin Brothers.

Bonnie DeSouza reported that they (Mattapoissett) are in the process of getting bids to complete the ½ mile Mattapoissett to Marion portion of the path (\$400,000).

Lorraine Heffernan questioned the 2022 timeline to which John Rockwell responded that we've been pushed back.

Steve Lohrenz discussed his participation in DOT and SRPEDD meetings. If we get 75% (design plan) in by February, we could be moved up a year. He will find out who we should target for letters.

Elise Frangos, former Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction at Old Rochester, introduced herself and described the valuable bike program at Old Rochester as well as the importance of a safe pathway for students to cycle to school.

3. Discussion of Wareham Connection Alternatives

Steve met with Al Slavin, SRPEDD chair and Wareham representative. There is much interest shown for improving a bike path from Swifts Beach to Wareham center via Route 6. The DOT is working on this SUP for 2022. It's looking like a connector would be from Point Road to Route 6 using a DOT design.

John Rockwell added historical information. In 1994 the Buzzards Bay Natural History program did a bike path survey finding that 85% of people wanted a bike path, There was more controversy than anticipated including concern with liability for the town. We need a plan to connect from Point Road to Wareham center.

Marion Pathway members should drive Route 6 as well as County Road and think about which is the best and safest route to Wareham for a SUP. This will be discussed at our next meeting after the new year.

Lorraine mentioned other possibilities as Fearing Hill Road and Blackmore Pond Road.

Paula asked if we are forced to connect via Route 6 since Wareham already has DOT approval.

4. Mattapoisett Connection

Bonnie DeSouza reported that the Mass Trails Grant is funding \$100,000 and hopefully this Mattapoisett connector will be under construction by March or April. This will include walking paths in Aucott woods.

5. Other Business

Lorraine moved to accept the Jan. 2, 2020 minutes. Unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Meere
Secretary
Marion Pathway Committee